

**CAPSULE SUMMARY****BA-1054****409 Pennsylvania Avenue****East Towson, Baltimore County****1935****Private**

The dwelling at 409 Pennsylvania Avenue was constructed in 1935 in the East Towson neighborhood of Baltimore County. The history of East Towson dates from the purchase of one-and-a-quarter acres of land by Daniel Harris in September 1853. This is believed to be the first documented African-American landholding in Towson, and is among the oldest such ethnic enclave in Baltimore County. Further, manumitted slaves and/or descendants of former slaves, many of who were owned by Charles Ridgely, populated the neighborhood. Hampered by the low economic status of the residents, development in the 19<sup>th</sup> century was slow, increasing after the turn of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. The setting of the property, building styles, and construction materials were guided by the limited economic status of the residents and their desire to establish a neighborhood of their own without the assistance of white architects, builders, and craftsmen. By 1927, the community was ninety-five percent improved with single-family dwellings, social buildings, a school, and religious structures.

Fronting southwest, this single-family dwelling fronts close to the road on a sloping grassy lot with a paved driveway. Sitting on a rock-faced concrete block foundation, this two-story wood frame house features a two-bay-wide façade capped with a front gable roof. A shed roof covers the full-width of the façade. It is supported with Tuscan columns and a wood rail balustrade and rests on a rock-faced concrete block pier foundation. The side passage entrance contains a single-leaf glass-and-panel door, and the windows are 1/1 double-hung vinyl sashes. The house is re-clad with vinyl siding, and the asphalt shingle-covered roof features overhanging eaves. A foundation cornerstone reads 1935.

# Maryland Historical Trust

## Maryland Inventory of Historic Properties Form

Inventory No. BA- 1054

### 1. Name of Property (indicate preferred name)

historic

other

### 2. Location

street and number 409 Pennsylvania Avenue not for publication

city, town Baltimore vicinity

county Baltimore County

### 3. Owner of Property (give names and mailing addresses of all owners)

name Not Available

street and number Not Available telephone Not Available

city, town Not Available state zip code

### 4. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Baltimore County Courthouse liber unknown folio unknown

city, town Towson tax map unknown tax parcel unknown tax ID number n/a

### 5. Primary Location of Additional Data

- ☐ Contributing Resource in National Register District  
☐ Contributing Resource in Local Historic District  
☐ Determined Eligible for the National Register/Maryland Register  
☐ Determined Ineligible for the National Register/Maryland Register  
☐ Recorded by HABS/HAER  
☐ Historic Structure Report or Research Report at MHT  
☐ Other: \_\_\_\_\_

### 6. Classification

Category	Ownership	Current Function		Resource Count	
<input type="checkbox"/> district	<input type="checkbox"/> public	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture	<input type="checkbox"/> landscape	Contributing	Noncontributing
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> building(s)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private	<input type="checkbox"/> commerce/trade	<input type="checkbox"/> recreation/culture	1	buildings
<input type="checkbox"/> structure	<input type="checkbox"/> both	<input type="checkbox"/> defense	<input type="checkbox"/> religion		sites
<input type="checkbox"/> site		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> domestic	<input type="checkbox"/> social		structures
<input type="checkbox"/> object		<input type="checkbox"/> education	<input type="checkbox"/> transportation		objects
		<input type="checkbox"/> funerary	<input type="checkbox"/> work in progress	1	Total
		<input type="checkbox"/> government	<input type="checkbox"/> unknown		
		<input type="checkbox"/> health care	<input type="checkbox"/> vacant/not in use		
		<input type="checkbox"/> industry	<input type="checkbox"/> other:		
				<b>Number of Contributing Resources previously listed in the Inventory</b> 1	

## 7. Description

Inventory No. BA- 1054

### Condition

<input type="checkbox"/> excellent	<input type="checkbox"/> deteriorated
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> good	<input type="checkbox"/> ruins
<input type="checkbox"/> fair	<input type="checkbox"/> altered

Prepare both a one paragraph summary and a comprehensive description of the resource and its various elements as it exists today.

Fronting southwest, this single-family dwelling fronts close to the road on a sloping grassy lot with a paved driveway. Sitting on a rock-faced concrete block foundation, this two-story wood frame house features a two bay wide façade capped with a front gable roof. A shed roof covers the full-width of the façade. It is supported with Tuscan columns and a wood rail balustrade and rests on a rock-faced concrete block pier foundation. The side passage entrance contains a single-leaf glass-and-panel door, and the windows are 1/1 double-hung vinyl sashes. The house is re-clad with vinyl siding, and the asphalt shingle-covered roof features overhanging eaves. A foundation cornerstone reads 1935.

## 8. Significance

Inventory No. BA- 1054

Period	Areas of Significance	Check and justify below		
<input type="checkbox"/> 1600-1699	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture	<input type="checkbox"/> economics	<input type="checkbox"/> health/medicine	<input type="checkbox"/> performing arts
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799	<input type="checkbox"/> archeology	<input type="checkbox"/> education	<input type="checkbox"/> industry	<input type="checkbox"/> philosophy
<input type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> engineering	<input type="checkbox"/> invention	<input type="checkbox"/> politics/government
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1900-1999	<input type="checkbox"/> art	<input type="checkbox"/> entertainment/ recreation	<input type="checkbox"/> landscape architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> religion
<input type="checkbox"/> 2000-	<input type="checkbox"/> commerce	<input type="checkbox"/> ethnic heritage	<input type="checkbox"/> law	<input type="checkbox"/> science
	<input type="checkbox"/> communications	<input type="checkbox"/> exploration/ settlement	<input type="checkbox"/> literature	<input type="checkbox"/> social history
	<input type="checkbox"/> community planning		<input type="checkbox"/> maritime history	<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
	<input type="checkbox"/> conservation		<input type="checkbox"/> military	<input type="checkbox"/> other:

**Specific dates** 1935

**Architect/Builder** Unknown

**Construction dates** 1935

Evaluation for:

☐ National Register

☐ Maryland Register

☒ not evaluated

Prepare a one-paragraph summary statement of significance addressing applicable criteria, followed by a narrative discussion of the history of the resource and its context. (For compliance projects, complete evaluation on a DOE Form – see manual.)

The house at 409 Pennsylvania Avenue was constructed 1935 in the East Towson neighborhood of Baltimore County. East Towson is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history, specifically the pre-Civil War development of an African-American neighborhood in a predominately white community. The history of this property dates from the purchase of one-and-a-quarter acres of land by Daniel Harris in September 1853. This is believed to be the first documented African-American landholding in Towson, and is among the oldest such ethnic enclave in Baltimore County. Further, manumitted slaves and/or descendents of former slaves, many of who were owned by Charles Ridgely, populated the neighborhood. Hampered by the low economic status of the residents, development in the 19<sup>th</sup> century was slow, increasing after the turn of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. The setting of the property, building styles, and construction materials were guided by the limited economic status of the residents and their desire to establish a neighborhood of their own without the assistance of white architects, builders, and craftsmen. By 1927, the community was ninety-five percent improved with single-family dwellings, social buildings, a school, and religious structures. Many of the current homeowners and tenants living in the neighborhood are descendents of the first African-American residents.

East Towson as a whole is representative of an important phase of architectural development in Baltimore County, illustrating the dilution of popular architectural styles to more efficiently meet the needs of the neighborhood, and the builders' untrained abilities to execute the fashionable ornamentation. Thus, East Towson provided lower cost housing in a more suburban neighborhood, rather than the urban setting their economic status typically perpetuated.

## 9. Major Bibliographical References

Inventory No. BA- 1054

*Atlas of Baltimore County, Maryland.* Philadelphia, PA: G. M. Hopkins, 1877.

Baltimore County Historic Inventory.

Brooks, Neal A. and Eric G. Rockel. *A History of Baltimore County.* Towson, MD: Friends of the Towson Library, Inc., 1979.

*Map of Baltimore County.* Philadelphia, PA: G. W. Bromley, 1915.

Scharf, J. Thomas. *History of Baltimore City and County From the Earliest Period to the Present Day: Including Biographical Sketches of Their Representative Men.* Philadelphia, PA: Louis H. Everts, 1881. Reprinted by Higginson Book Company, Salem, MA.

Sidney, J. C. *Map of the City and County of Baltimore, Maryland, from Original Surveys.* Baltimore, MD: James M. Stephens, 1850.

## 10. Geographical Data

Acreage of surveyed property Unknown

Acreage of historical setting Unknown

Quadrangle name Towson

Quadrangle scale: 1:24,000

### Verbal boundary description and justification

The house is located at 409 Pennsylvania Avenue in East Towson in the Ninth District of Baltimore County..

## 11. Form Prepared by

name/title	K. Baynard, R. Weidlich, Architectural Historians		
organization	EHT Tracerics, Incorporated	date	January 2, 2001
street & number	1121 5th Street NW	telephone	202.393.1199
city or town	Washington	state	DC

The Maryland Inventory of Historic Properties was officially created by an Act of the Maryland Legislature to be found in the Annotated Code of Maryland, Article 41, Section 181 KA, 1974 supplement.

The survey and inventory are being prepared for information and record purposes only and do not constitute any infringement of individual property rights.

return to: Maryland Historical Trust  
DHCD/DHCP  
100 Community Place  
Crownsville, MD 21032-2023  
410-514-7600

# East Towson: Planimetric Data



Prepared by:  
Baltimore County Office of Planning  
401 Bosley Avenue  
Towson, Maryland 21204  
June, 2001



Scale  
1 inch = 200 feet  
1:2400  
100 0 100 200 Feet

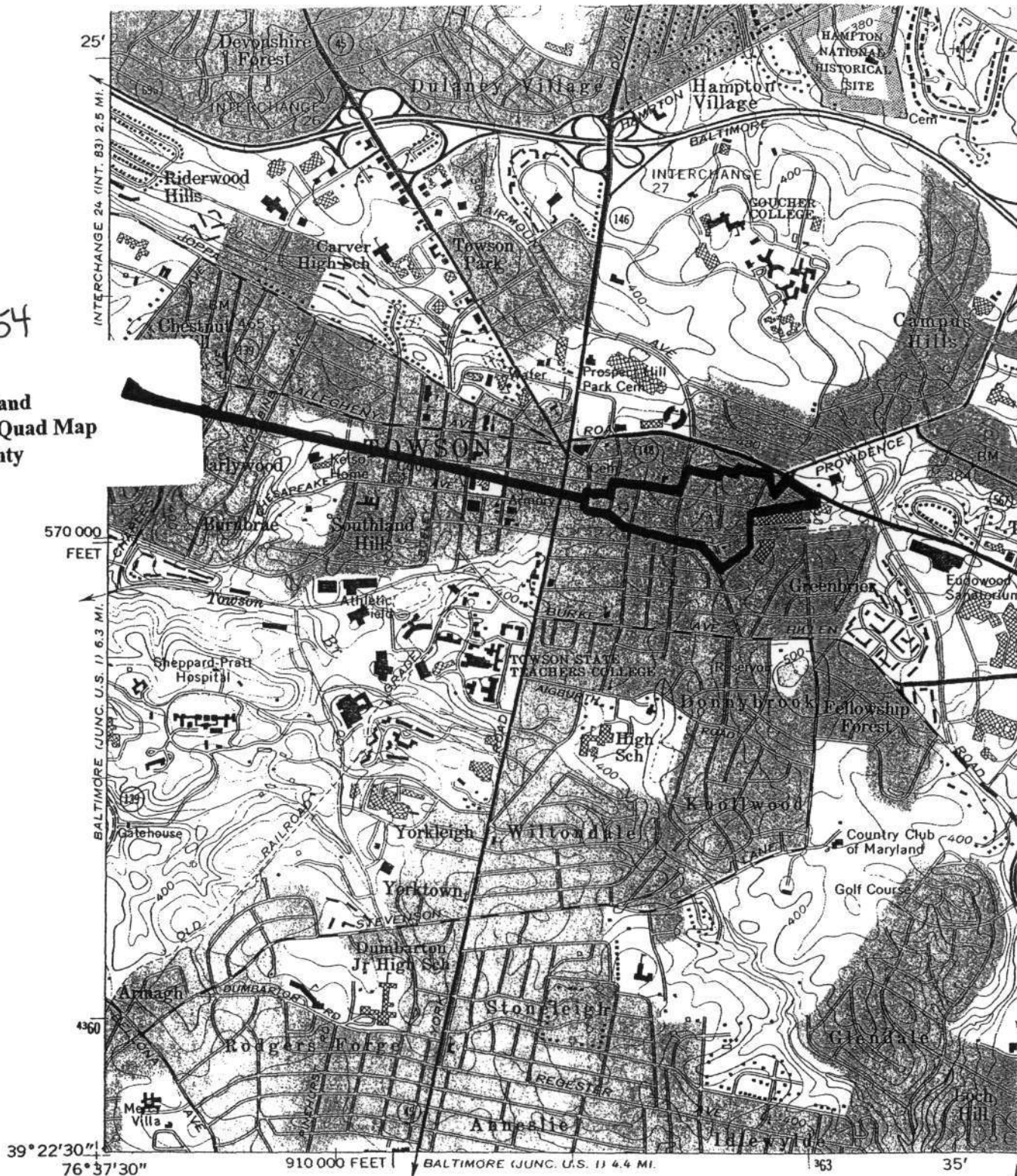
Legend

Paved Roads	Study Area Boundary	Hydrographic Features
Unpaved Roads	Buildings	Vegetation
Paved Parking / Driveways		

Data Sources:  
Planimetric Data: Baltimore County OIT GIS Services Unit (1:2400)  
Parcel Boundaries: Baltimore County OIT GIS Services Unit (1:2400)  
Study Area: Baltimore County Office of Planning (1:2400)  
Coordinate System:  
Maryland State Plane: NAD83/91 Horizontal Datum  
Elevations in Feet: NAVD88 Vertical Datum  
Date of Data Capture: March 1996  
Scale of Data Capture: 1" = 100'



BA-1054  
East Towson  
Towson, Maryland  
Towson USGS Quad Map  
Baltimore County



(BALTIMORE WEST)  
5602 1 SW

Mapped by the Army Map Service  
Edited and published by the Geological Survey  
Control by USGS, USC&GS, USCE, and Maryland  
Bureau of Control Surveys and Maps

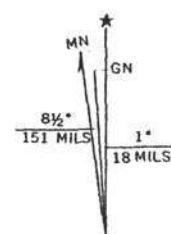
Culture and drainage in part compiled from aerial photographs  
taken 1943. Topography by planetable surveys 1944  
Culture revised by the Geological Survey 1957

Polyconic projection. 1927 North American datum  
10,000-foot grid based on Maryland coordinate system  
1000-metre Universal Transverse Mercator grid ticks,  
zone 18, shown in blue

Red tint indicates areas in which only  
landmark buildings are shown

Revisions shown in purple compiled by the Geological Survey from  
aerial photographs taken 1966 and 1974. This information not  
field checked

Purple tint indicates extension of urban areas



UTM GRID AND 1974 MAGNETIC NORTH  
DECLINATION AT CENTER OF SHEET





BA-1054

HOUSE, 409 PENNSYLVANIA AVENUE

BALTIMORE COUNTY, MD

TRACERIES

10/2001

MD-SAPD

SOUTH ELEVATION

1 of 4



BA-1054

HOUSE, 409 PENNSYLVANIA AVENUE  
BALTIMORE COUNTY, MD

TRACERIES

10/2001

MD-SHPO  
SOUTHWEST CORNER  
2 of 4



BA-1054

HOUSE, 409 PENNSYLVANIA AVENUE  
BALTIMORE COUNTY, MD  
TRACERIES

10/2001

MD-SHPD

SOUTHEAST CORNER

3 of 4





BA-1054

HOUSE, 409 PENNSYLVANIA AVENUE

BALTIMORE COUNTY, MD

TRACERIES

10/2001

MD-SHPO

NORTH ELEVATION

4 of 4

## INVENTORY FORM FOR STATE HISTORIC SITES SURVEY

**1 NAME**

HISTORIC

HERRMANN HOUSE III

AND/OR COMMON

**2 LOCATION**

STREET &amp; NUMBER 409 Pennsylvania Ave

second

CITY, TOWN

Towson Md. 21204

VICINITY OF

Baltimore

CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT

STATE

COUNTY

**3 CLASSIFICATION**

## CATEGORY

☐ DISTRICT  
☐ BUILDING(S)  
☒ STRUCTURE  
☐ SITE  
☐ OBJECT

## OWNERSHIP

☐ PUBLIC  
☒ PRIVATE  
☐ BOTH  
**PUBLIC ACQUISITION**  
☐ IN PROCESS  
☐ BEING CONSIDERED

## STATUS

☒ OCCUPIED  
☐ UNOCCUPIED  
☐ WORK IN PROGRESS  
**ACCESSIBLE**  
☐ YES: RESTRICTED  
☐ YES: UNRESTRICTED  
☐ NO

## PRESENT USE

☐ AGRICULTURE ☐ MUSEUM  
☐ COMMERCIAL ☐ PARK  
☐ EDUCATIONAL ☒ PRIVATE RESIDENCE  
☐ ENTERTAINMENT ☐ RELIGIOUS  
☐ GOVERNMENT ☐ SCIENTIFIC  
☐ INDUSTRIAL ☐ TRANSPORTATION  
☐ MILITARY ☐ OTHER

**4 OWNER OF PROPERTY**

NAME

Agnus Herrimann

Telephone #: 823-4236

STREET &amp; NUMBER

231 Burke Ave.

CITY, TOWN

Towson Md.

VICINITY OF

STATE, zip code

**5 LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION**COURTHOUSE,  
REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.

Baltimore County Courthouse

Liber #:

Folio #: 2462:466

STREET &amp; NUMBER

401 Bosley Ave.

CITY, TOWN

Towson Md. 21204

STATE

**6 REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS**

TITLE

BA-1054 - 409 Pennsylvania

c. 1915 - 1927

This two-story frame house is covered with brown wooden shingle. The building is three rooms deep by two bays wide, and is shaded by a porch along the street facade.

**7 DESCRIPTION****CONDITION**☐ EXCELLENT☒ GOOD☐ FAIR☐ DETERIORATED☐ RUINS☐ UNEXPOSED**CHECK ONE**☒ UNALTERED☐ ALTERED**CHECK ONE**☐ ORIGINAL SITE☐ MOVED DATE \_\_\_\_\_**DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (IF KNOWN) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE**

409 Pennsylvania

(post 1915)

Luther Bently

This brown wood shingled house was built after 1915. It is almost identical to its neighbor, 407 Pennsylvania. It is a narrow two-story structure, two bays wide by four bays deep. Its gable end, the south side of the house, faces the street. The house is three rooms deep, with a stair between the first and second rooms.

All the windows hold 1/1 sash. The first, second and fourth bays on the east and the second and fourth bays on the west contain a window on each floor. A two-story shed-roofed addition projecting at the third bay on the east side is lit by a four-pane window on the south on each floor.

Two windows light the second floor facade, while one appears to the east of the front door on the first floor. A porch, whose shed roof is supported by tapered columns, crosses the front of the house. Its balustrade is formed by a light hand rail and three spaced horizontal boards.

The house rests on a cellar of concrete blocks shaped to imitate stone.

CONTINUE ON SEPARATE SHEET IF NECESSARY

# 8 SIGNIFICANCE

BA-1054

PERIOD	AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE -- CHECK AND JUSTIFY BELOW				
<input type="checkbox"/> PREHISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> ARCHEOLOGY-PREHISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMUNITY PLANNING	<input type="checkbox"/> LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> RELIGION	
<input type="checkbox"/> 1400-1499	<input type="checkbox"/> ARCHEOLOGY-HISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> CONSERVATION	<input type="checkbox"/> LAW	<input type="checkbox"/> SCIENCE	
<input type="checkbox"/> 1500-1599	<input type="checkbox"/> AGRICULTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> ECONOMICS	<input type="checkbox"/> LITERATURE	<input type="checkbox"/> SCULPTURE	
<input type="checkbox"/> 1600-1699	<input type="checkbox"/> ARCHITECTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> EDUCATION	<input type="checkbox"/> MILITARY	<input type="checkbox"/> SOCIAL/HUMANITARIAN	
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799	<input type="checkbox"/> ART	<input type="checkbox"/> ENGINEERING	<input type="checkbox"/> MUSIC	<input type="checkbox"/> THEATER	
<input type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMERCE	<input type="checkbox"/> EXPLORATION/SETTLEMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> PHILOSOPHY	<input type="checkbox"/> TRANSPORTATION	
<input type="checkbox"/> 1900-	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMUNICATIONS	<input type="checkbox"/> INDUSTRY	<input type="checkbox"/> POLITICS/GOVERNMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> OTHER (SPECIFY)	
		<input type="checkbox"/> INVENTION			

SPECIFIC DATES

BUILDER/ARCHITECT

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

See Herman House II for statement

This property as well as 407 and 405 Pennsylvania Ave. represents an attempt by private land speculators to acquire property control in E. Towson. During the 1960's E. Towson as well as West Towson was rezoned to accommodate commercial establishments. This property represents the acquisition of such property by land speculators outside the East Towson Community.

CONTINUE ON SEPARATE SHEET IF NECESSARY



**9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES**

CONTINUE ON SEPARATE SHEET IF NECESSARY

**10 GEOGRAPHICAL DATA**

ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY \_\_\_\_\_

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

LIST ALL STATES AND COUNTIES FOR PROPERTIES OVERLAPPING STATE OR COUNTY BOUNDARIES

STATE

COUNTY

STATE

COUNTY

**11 FORM PREPARED BY**

NAME / TITLE

Marcus Pollock/coordinator Merry Stinson/architect 7/77

ORGANIZATION

Committee to Save E. Towson/Towson Ymca

DATE

823-8870

STREET &amp; NUMBER

600 W. Chesapeake Ave.

TELEPHONE

CITY OR TOWN

Towson Md. 21204

STATE

The Maryland Historic Sites Inventory was officially created by an Act of the Maryland Legislature, to be found in the Annotated Code of Maryland, Article 41, Section 181 KA, 1974 Supplement.

The Survey and Inventory are being prepared for information and record purposes only and do not constitute any infringement of individual property rights.

RETURN TO: Maryland Historical Trust  
The Shaw House, 21 State Circle  
Annapolis, Maryland 21401  
(301) 267-1438



BA-1054  
Herrmann House III  
409 Pa.  
Towson, Md.  
Southeast

Merry Stinson  
1977